

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2220
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USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

S E C R E T CARACAS 4262

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR MASS VE
SUBJECT: BACKSTOPPING OUR ARMS RESTRAINT INITIATIVE--
IMETP FOR VENEZUELA

REFS: (A) STATE 103769 (B) CARACAS 3267 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST ONCE AGAIN THAT DEPARTMENT RECONSIDER \$100,000 FOR IMETP FOR VENEZUELA. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST IS TO RELATE SUCH TRAINING TO BROADER REGIONAL GOALS, MOST SPECIFICALLY CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICIES, POLICIES WHICH PRESIDENT PEREZ HAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSED (REF B), IN WHICH VENEZUELA HAS A KEY REGIONAL ROLE TO PLAY.

2. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL COURSES, SUCH AS THOSE OFFERED AT THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL, AND OTHER SIMILAR COURSES, OFFER EXPOSURE TO CONCEPTS COMPATIBLE WITH AND REINFORCING OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT, AS WELL AS PROVIDING COST-EFFICIENT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING TO CAREER OFFICERS. FURTHER, SUCH HIGH LEVEL TRAINING, IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, CAN BE CONSIDERED AS MEETING A "REGIONAL" GOAL EVEN IF THE TRAINING PER SE IS BILATERAL, THUS MEETING CONGRESSIONAL
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REQUIREMENTS.

3. IN ADDITION, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WITHOUT IMETP, THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY, WITH ITS RELATIVELY SMALL MILITARY BUDGET (IN TERMS OF GNP) IS LOSING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES SINCE TO OBTAIN THE SAME AMOUNT OF TRAINING PURCHASED THROUGH FMS OR US COMMERCIAL SOURCES, VENEZUELA MUST PAY

SUBSTANTIALLY MORE. VENEZUELA MAY BE ABLE TO OBTAIN CHEAPER TRAINING FROM MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS SUCH AS ARGENTINA, CHILE, BRAZIL, PERU OR EVEN FROM THE SOVIET UNION (OFFERED BUT REFUSED), BUT IT IS TRAINING ALMOST GUARANTEED NOT TO SUPPORT THE CONCEPTS OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. THUS, OUR POLICY IS, IN FACT, PENALIZING THE VENEZUELAN FOR THEIR OWN PRUDENCE AND BECAUSE THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE, IF NOT THE MILITARY (WHOSE BUDGETS HAVE NOT INCREASED IN PROPORTION TO THE OVERALL GOVERNMENT BUDGET) IS RELATIVELY WEALTHY. WHILE THE EMBASSY REALIZES THAT ITS DEFINITION OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES MAY BE UNORTHODOX, IT IS CONVINCED THAT IMETP TRAINING, THROUGH US PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS IN WHICH CAREER VENEZUELAN OFFICERS CAN OBTAIN INSIGHTS INTO AND UNDERSTANDING OF NOT ONLY GENERAL MILITARY SUBJECTS, BUT ALSO THE CONCEPTS UNDERLYING THE THEORY OF ARMS RESTRAINTS JUSTIFY VENEZUELA RECEIVING \$100,000 OF IMETP FUNDS FOR FY 1979.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: GIVEN THE REGIONAL RESULTS THAT PROFESSIONAL COURSES WOULD PROVIDE IN THE LONGER TERM, THE KEY ROLE THAT THE USG EXPECTS VENEZUELA TO PLAY IN OUR ARMS RESTRAINT INITIATIVE, I REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZE VENEZUELA IMETP FUNDING FOR \$100,000 FOR FY 79.
VAKY

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